

Tips for Raising Safe and Healthy Kids

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION
AGENCY FOR TOXIC SUBSTANCES AND DISEASE REGISTRY

Plan a Healthy Pregnancy

Give your child a good start by planning a healthy pregnancy. Women should take folic acid before getting pregnant and avoid drinking alcohol during pregnancy to prevent several birth defects. Know your family and medical history to determine if the baby or you are at increased risk for certain diseases and conditions.



Keep Their Check-ups and Immunizations Up-to-Date

Routine exams and screenings help you and your kids prevent, identify, and treat health problems when they arise. Vaccines help prevent infectious diseases and save lives.



Protect Your Kids

Although kids are small, they are quick, curious, and not aware of dangers. Take steps to make sure your home, vehicle, play areas, day care, schools, and other environments are safe for your kids. Use car seats and seat belts for appropriate ages. Supervise your kids, and make them aware of hazardous substances and situations.



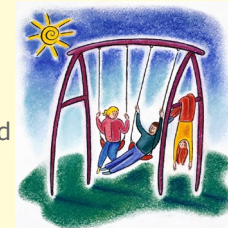
Provide Healthy Meals

Eating right will help provide the nutrients needed to have energy, build strong bones, and fight diseases and other conditions. Pay attention to what and how much your kids eat. This could help indicate problems of which you may not be aware.



Keep Them Active

Regular physical activity in childhood and adolescence improves strength and endurance, helps build healthy bones and muscles, helps control weight, reduces anxiety and stress, increases self esteem, and may improve blood pressure and cholesterol levels. It is recommended that children and adolescents participate in at least 60 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity most days of the week.



Live a Smoke-free Life

Being exposed to second-hand smoke is just as unhealthy as smoking directly. Women should be smoke-free during pregnancy to prevent premature birth and other health problems. Stay smoke-free to help reduce your children's risk for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), bronchitis, asthma, and pneumonia.



Monitor Their Activities

Kids learn from family, friends, television, music, video games, the internet, and more. These influences help to shape their view of the world, how they interact, and what they learn. Know what they are listening to and watching, how much time they spend with an activity, and if it's appropriate for their age. Ask yourself if there are healthy and fun activities they (and you) can do, and start today.



Teach Them Healthy Habits

Provide your kids with a good foundation to help them make healthy choices every day. Seat belts, helmets, sunscreen, tooth brushing, and hand washing are just a few of the things that help to keep us all safe and healthy. Make good health choices a part of your daily life to show them how to do it.



Talk and Listen to Your Kids

Health starts at home. Talking to your kids may help them better understand how they can be healthy, safe, and happy. Find out what's going on with them, how they are making decisions and handling problems, and what questions they have about life. There are plenty of resources available if you need to get some answers first.



Provide Love and Support

Kids need the support and love of family and friends. Times of stress or emergency may make kids vulnerable to health and psychological problems. Determine if stress related to school, body changes, thoughts and feelings, family issues, death of loved ones, or changes in general are causing problems. Help your kids make connections and have balance in their lives.

